



## MORE GREEN CLEANING TIPS

- Think before you clean. Can you use simple soap and water, or is a strong chemical cleanser needed for this job?
- Hot water is not needed for cleaning! Save fossil fuels and air pollution by using cold or warm water.
- If a cleanser is needed, choose the least toxic product that will be effective
- Look for products carrying a safety logo such as “Safer Choice” from the US Department of Environmental Protection. More than 400 cleaning products have the “Safer Choice” rating, products for cleaning hands, floors, kitchen counters, dishwashers, clothing, cars, or almost any purpose.
- Do not use triclosan in your home or office, an additive in soaps that is harmful to Mother Nature.
- Do not use bleach, a cause of asthma and other breathing problems in adults and children. Bleach should be used only to clean up serious contamination by human secretions such as blood or feces.

## FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

- Ask at work whether “Green Cleaning” methods could be tried there. Cleaning products with the “Safer Choice” label are generally not more expensive than other options but are safer for you, your co-workers and for the community.
- Make everyone healthier by asking the leaders at your house of worship, social club, or schools to adopt “Green Cleaning” in those facilities.
- Where you buy cleaning products, ask the store to offer more “Safer Choice” or similar products, and to display them where easy to find on store shelves.



*Author: Rahila Hassan MPH  
Todd L Sack MD FACP  
University of North Florida,  
Jacksonville, FL USA*

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YOUR HEALTHY HOME

# GREEN CLEANING

*Saving money, healthier communities.*





## BACKGROUND

- “Green Cleaning” means keeping toxic chemicals out of your home, office, and community.
- Our world and our bodies are covered with living bacteria, fungi, and viruses. Most of these are harmless or beneficial to our health.
- More than 99% of harmful germs will be eliminated with simple soap and water, with minimal scrubbing.
- Strong cleansers labeled as “anti-bacterial”, “sanitizing” or “disinfecting” usually are not needed, are expensive, and can be dangerous.
- Did you know that disinfectants are ineffective unless left on a surface for a “dwell time” of at least ten minutes? Because few people use dwell times, workers and families are exposed to the hazards of disinfectants without the cleaning benefits.
- “Clean is not a smell!” Scents in cleaning products, air fresheners, and candles are not rigorously safety tested and should be avoided.



## FOR ROUTINE CLEANING

- Most cleaning tasks need only mild soap or mild detergent, plus cold water.
- Try using a “microcloth” instead of paper towels, sponges, or rags. Microcloths are sold in grocery & hardware stores. They are super-absorbent and can be rinsed and re-used hundreds of times, saving you time and money.

## Safe Cleaning Products

- Look for product labels carrying logos indicating a high standard of safety for your family: Safer Choice, Green Seal, EcoLogo, Design for the Environment, or Europe’s Ecolabel.
- These are safer for the workers who manufacture the cleaning product, safer for those using it to clean, and safer for the environment.



## FOR SEVERE CLEANING

- Use strong chemical cleaners only for severe contamination such as with human blood, feces, or other secretions.
- All sanitizers and disinfectants are hazardous chemicals. Read the instructions and be careful.
- Avoid bleach (sodium hypochlorite). Bleach has been banned from one US State due to its dangers. It contributes to asthma attacks in children and adults.
- Allow strong cleaners to “dwell” on a surface for ten minutes to be effective, then wipe off thoroughly to remove as much chemical as possible.



Do not trust product labels with words like “natural”, “green”, “non-toxic”, or “safe” unless you also see one of the logos above. These terms are unregulated and often misleading.